1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

511 superfluous needs to be dispensed with every time camp is moved,
361 which occurs every few days. Only in thoughts and feelings can they be as rich as any other people; but this requires a particular kind of temperament possessed by only a few individuals in the tribe.

182 Their economic life, social organization, mythology, and religion form a well-knit pattern of existence. There are no loose ends, but a knot here and there appears in the form of vagueness or contradiction. But I think that the fault lies with us who would introduce our type of organization into their knowledge. We expect more from a primitive group than we ourselves could offer. Besides, it is doubtful whether we ever present the picture of their culture as they see it; if we did we might not understand or we might even be surprised at its orderliness.

177 Although the Yaruros have been in touch with Euro-American cul-
121 ture for several centuries they have borrowed remarkably little. What culture they possessed several centuries ago we do not know. There is practically no information about them in the literature. There is justification, therefore, in publishing this record, in spite of many apparent deficiencies. Since plans for another visit to fill in the gaps in my field notes have not materialized and the Yaruros may be gone before another ethnologist can live with them it seems advisable to make this material available.

121 Anthropology, among other things, is concerned with the interrelationships of groups of men and with the functions of social structures as developed by man and his environment. I have tried to keep in mind that in presenting a first account of an unknown people it may not be at all out of place to draw a general but intimate picture of the daily life of the Yaruros, their emotional, cognitive and conative responses to the world about them, and even their attitude toward the ethnologist who appeared among them with only the objective of hold-
123 ing friendly conversations about themselves. At first they were suspicious, but they soon caught the point and enjoyed the experience as much as I did. An attempt has been made to give these pictures, and to explain the series of events which made possible with these nomads the intimate association that followed the first few days of unfriendliness.

● 124 No attempt has been made to reconcile differences in the information
128 obtained from various informants, not even if there is a contradiction. It was the first time that the Yaruros had been asked to organize their knowledge of their own culture; contradictions and vagueness were to be expected. My informants were exclusively men, even for those
123 phases of culture which admittedly belong to the female world. A cultural obstacle which I respected prevented any direct social intercourse with the women. The women's domain is respected by the

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

791 the universe, his understanding of life and death, of the history of his people and their future, of morality, and of justice. Likewise he was anxious to hear what message I had to bring from my people in respect to these things. So, sitting under the shelter of some 124 592 branches, we talked. As we talked we both worked. Pablo Reyes kept his hands occupied making string, fixing bows and arrows, and I, when not busy writing, pretended to carve little figures out of wood. The children played about us and Pablo's three wives kept shyly in the background, though listening carefully to what we said and often throwing inquisitive glances in our direction.

122 172 Profiting by our proximity to Guiana, I decided to visit Urbana where I could buy some goods for my friends and at the same time gather information about archeology. The wind blew so hard it proved necessary to drag the canoe along the shore of the island until we found the best place for a crossing. The sand was raised in clouds and our bodies were peppered with it so that we were forced to cover up closely. It finally proved impossible to continue and we were forced to stop and camp in the open with our backs to the wind and no shelter except what we could get from our hammocks. But holding them up was as much a hardship as to be bombarded by sand. We made one attempt to cross the Orinoco in the afternoon but we were forced to give it up. Finally, late in the afternoon, putting our trust in "God and the Virgin," as the Venezuelan canoemen say, we launched the canoe and reached La Urbana about midnight. Our stay there was necessarily short and we hastened back to Linda Bara the following day, but I gathered enough from the examination of collections at the Salesian Mission to determine that the archeology on that side of the Orinoco is quite different from that of the llanos.

136 At sunset as we were approaching the island we saw an army of bats in flight. The bats were coming as a cloud out of a Guiana hill in the far distance, and flew directly over us, and across to the other shore of the river, disappearing into the forest. We watched this vast army for about 15 minutes and then continued on our way, not because we had seen the last of the bats, but because time was short. I was told by my guide that this daily flight of the bats from the hills of Guiana across the Orinoco generally lasts two hours. How many thousands of them live in this cave and fly daily to forage for food in the forest is a matter of conjecture. The bat, so plentiful [172] in this region, seems to have inspired the ancient potters of the llanos to use the head as a motif of decoration.

124 When we reached Pablo Reyes the next day we found there several other Yaruro families, relatives of Pablo, encamped with him. We talked some more, then departed several days later in order to return to Landaeta, who proved to be my best informant.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

781 Puaná stayed with us for about an hour and a half, talking most of the time about me.

And finally at about 5 o'clock Kuma herself came to visit me and, like Hatchawa, urged me to drink of the shaman's drink. I had to drink a gourd full of it, since it was held to my lips until I finished it. She gave me messages similar to the others. Finally other Yaruros came, and the shaman eventually returned, being greeted with affection by all. We stopped when the sun rose and began another day of primitive life. We had danced and sung almost continuously for 36 hours.

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This was my reception among the Yaruros after my return from La Urbana. We talked day and night about religion, and about the world in which we lived. I learned that a mother-in-law and son-in-law must never look upon each other and never talk to each other, though they must be careful to do each other service; that a man must marry his first cousin, and that socially he is under obligation to his maternal uncle who later becomes his father-in-law. Under Landaeta's tutelage the material in this report was compiled. In a sense, therefore, this is his report.

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One day I announced to Landaeta that I would have to leave in the near future, giving as a reason that my wife and child needed me at home. Actually, there were other considerations; my physical condition was becoming worse, though the sores on my feet were a little better; and for the time being I had quietly exhausted the possibilities of obtaining fresh material from my friends. After all, we had been in contact with each other for six weeks, the major portion of it living communely and conversing with the shaman continuously day after day, sometimes even from sunrise to sunrise. My daily schedule consisted of rising at sunrise, drinking a little coffee sometimes brought to me by Landaeta, and immediately plunging into discussions of religious themes. This would last up to about 10 o'clock when Landaeta would withdraw and busy himself making string or carving gourds for several hours. During this period I would seek clarification of some points from whomsoever was present, or work on social organization, or on genealogy. In the early afternoon Landaeta would be back with new material, new ideas, having thought over what he had said, what I had said, and what still needed to be said. This would continue until sundown.

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521 Then there was a short intermission for dinner, but soon afterwards I was hurried over to the eastern edge of the camp, where Landaeta and his people sat after dinner, and there we would sit while the women made cigars for us, talking about mythology, religion and general philosophical concepts. These discussions would last until 10 or 11 o'clock, and often much later, and not rarely shamanistic

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

INHERITANCE OF WIVES

583 Monogamy is the usual rule, but occasionally both polygyny and polyandry exist. If no women are available, a man may share his young wife with his brother or parallel cousin whom he calls brother also. I saw two such cases. In a tribe whose total membership may not exceed 150 such situations may easily arise.

587 589 The more common situation is the inheritance of wives. If a man dies, his wife may be taken care of by her father, but more often by her former husband's brother. She takes her place as wife number two, especially if he is a good hunter. Other women whom a man may inherit as wives are his aunts on his father's side and even his paternal grandmother. I saw one case in which a man had inherited his daughter's child. Whether these cases represent the results of [616] deculturation of the Yaruros in recent years, or pure necessity, it is impossible to say. It is worth noting that the taboo on marrying a member of one's moiety is strictly observed.

512 605 Another relationship common among South American Indians which is present among the Yaruros is the hunting friendship between two men. Seldom does one meet a young Yaruro who does not have a hunting companion. Upon marriage this relationship may be weakened, though often the companionship persists. Generally the men are two parallel cousins. They show much affection toward each other, even in camp. For instance, such a pair standing with arms around each other's necks is a common sight. I have no reason to suspect any abnormal sexual relations between such couples.

124 582 [165] An attempt was made to collect genealogies, but no satisfactory results were obtained, due to the confusion that exists among the Yaruros. So many have suffered premature death, especially men, that the genealogies show a tremendous complexity. This complexity exists, of course, only for us. The Yaruro has his system, which is to guard against incest as he defines it. So long as members of the same moiety do not marry, everything else is permissible. One's cross cousin of the same, or nearly the same, age is the preferential choice, but the Yaruros cannot control birth and death, so that the preference is purely theoretical. I saw young boys married to old women and young girls married to old men. The answer was that there weren't any others to marry.

However, enough was gathered from the genealogies to verify the system as described: Members of the same moiety do not marry. Every one else can, except father and daughter, and, of course, father's brothers and daughter, whom she addresses as father anyway.

7: Leeds E-4, 5 (1958) 1964 SS19 Yaruro SS19

social features reported, ideological features reported, and relations with other tribes mentioned. The card sets will be arranged by geographical location of the tribe so that for any given time period one may pull out all the sets and arrange the tribes in their spatial order. Thus for any time period a picture of the trait distributions, cultural-ecological conditions, inter-tribal socio-ecological relations, and acculturational-social contacts and events should be obtainable.

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Though, to date, I have been concerned mainly with collecting bibliography and documentary materials rather than with their analysis, I should like to hazard several very tentative conclusions, or perhaps guesses, with respect to the ethnohistory of the llanos, and particularly of the Yaruro, based on the geographic, ethnographic, archeological, linguistic, and historical data known to me now. Some, however, are presented more as hypotheses for proof or disproof through continued research.

First, Petrullo's description is erroneous at least as respects the subsistence economy. Late Nineteenth Century travellers like Crévaux and Vela and several persons in this century mention horticulture. Still earlier reports go back to the earlier Eighteenth Century when missionaries speak of horticulture. Their reports apply to the Yaruro, Otomaco, Guahibo, and other groups. It has not yet been possible to decide whether they introduced or found horticulture among these peoples. Petrullo's error appears to have several explanations:

A) That he was incapacitated for several weeks by sore feet and was unable to travel about the land away from the rivers. In my experience, a careful criss-crossing of the land on foot is an absolute necessity if one is to know how these peoples carry on their subsistence activities. I have paced off with a pedometer the entire area used by the group I worked with. In the course of so doing I discovered all kinds of gardens, houses, and other evidences of their land use. These would not otherwise have been discovered by an observer nor mentioned by the Yaruro, since mainly what is physically present is, to them, worthy of mention.[10] I should say a great portion of my most important data came from such accidental discoveries made while walking about.

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[10] I would stand at a certain spot in a garden and ask "Whose garden is this?" "Juan's." Then I might walk perhaps ten feet and say, "Juan keeps his garden well." "But this is not Juan's garden." "You just said that this was Juan's garden." "That was over there on the other side of that row of corn." This happened a number of times. I also asked once, "Is there female shamanism here?" "No." Several days later, a group from an neighboring village came to visit. After an all-night session of the *tow'be*, several women performed shamanistic rites. I said, "I thought you said there is no female shamanism here?" "There isn't anyone here [i. e. in our locality] who practices — these women are from upstream." The same cleaving to locus was observed with respect to time. I was told that Miguel was a shaman ("musico"). I said "Miguel, are you not a musico?" "I am not a musico. I cannot sing." A few weeks later, he was singing. I said,

7: Leeds E-4, 5 (1958) 1964 SS19 Yaruro SS19

B) Petrullo restricted his visits to the sand banks along and in the river, and, after his first arrival, most of his travelling was done on the streams. Gardens are never to be found on the sand banks and bars, but rather, usually, on the affluent creeks which are just above flood level of the rivers in the rainy season. Therefore he was not in a position to see the gardens which Le Besnerais later saw in the same area when he explored back from the river.

C) Petrullo was in the llanos in the dry season when the Yaruro move nearer the rivers both to secure a water supply as the water table lowers and to avail themselves of the much more plentiful and accessible river fauna[11] at a time when vegetable harvests are reduced because of drought. He was therefore observing dry-season subsistence — and perhaps only a part of it.

D) The probability that he observed only a part of the dry-season subsistence pattern in his area is reinforced by two considerations:

1) He reports the fact that 150 Yaruro had been massacred by Venezuelans a month before his arrival (p. 181). Their response under such circumstances is, as fast as possible, to get off the land that the Venezuelans want and to move to the rivers. I myself had occasion to observe such a diaspora, occurring in response to a smaller massacre. In view of this sort of response, it is likely, therefore, that Petrullo's group was living off river resources and away from their gardens at the time of his visit.

2) Maps indicate that in the lower part of the Capanaparo River, the flooding is greater and the number and size of side creeks suitable for horticulture is smaller than upstream on any of the large rivers. In other words, the available area for garden plots is much smaller, and riverine subsistence proportionately more important. Upriver, and more especially on the Sinaruco and on the middle and upper Cunaviche and Arauca rivers, there is much more tillable ground.

"I thought you said you could not sing and were not a musico?" "Yes, that was true last week when I had the grippe, but now my grippe is better I can be a musico again." And many similar examples of the extreme caution one needed to exercise regarding negative responses in order to be sure they were not merely descriptive of the place and moment. If Petrullo asked "Do you raise crops?", his informants would most likely have said, "No, we have no crops here", under the circumstances in which he found them.

[11] The river fauna is more plentiful and accessible in dry season because, first, it is more concentrated, and, second, it is more visible. During the wet, flooding season, fish, and other animals spread even into smaller streams and out upon the watery llanos — we caught a small piranha on the grassy, watercovered plain itself. On the plains, the fish are lost among the grasses and are virtually impossible to spear or shoot with bow and arrow. The river turbulence of the rainy season, meanwhile, has brought so much mud from further upstream that many of the rivers are opaque, especially in those parts of the llanos constructed of mud rather than sandy soils. Fish and the water reptiles and mammals are well-cloaked by the murky stream. The waters and the plains clear in the dry season so that the fish are concentrated in the limpid, grassless waters of the rivers, while land animals and riparian fauna are all crowded together near the banks in their search for food and water.